

# ARTS AND CULTURE ELEMENT



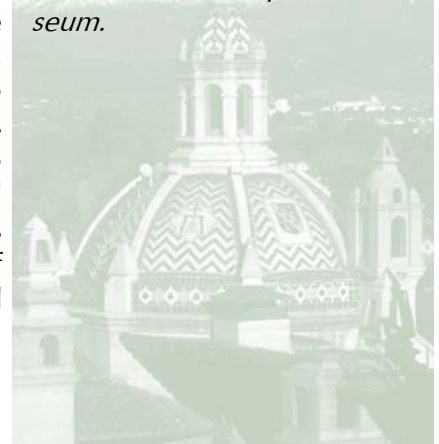
The impetus for the Arts and Culture Element is the shared community belief that the arts are an essential part of Riverside, both intrinsically and economically, and that the arts make significant contributions to the quality of life in Riverside. Arts and culture help to create a more livable city, stimulate the local economy, enhance the urban environment, celebrate the natural environment, engage a wide spectrum of citizens and empower neighborhoods. The arts are part of the social fabric of our City, helping to define and express who we are as a community - historically, today and in the future. Art brings the community together, creating situations not merely for enjoyment and beauty, but also for dialogue, thought and growth.

Riverside has a proud history as a regional center for arts, culture and related education programs that are central to the essence and character of our City. Riverside is home to a well-developed cultural environment where a diversity of art is created, performed, taught and exhibited. With the efforts to revitalize Downtown and formally establish an Arts and Culture District and the rapidly growing programs and facilities of the City's four higher education institutions, Riverside is significantly increasing its cultural and arts foundation and becoming a flourishing center for the arts known beyond the Inland Empire and Southern California. Riverside is striving to become a magnet for the arts — a place which attracts world class entertainers and artists to perform and show their work and draws visitors from around the world to experience the arts.

At the same time, however, the ability of the arts to thrive in Riverside and continue to grow beyond regional recognition faces challenges. Individual artists of all disciplines and cultural backgrounds have limited access to funding. Nonprofit arts organizations experience tougher competition for funding to maintain stability and growth. Schools face budget constraints that may force arts programs to be cut. In addition, coordinated marketing and promotion for the arts in Riverside historically has not occurred. Space for local artists' housing, studios and exhibits is limited. Importantly, Riversiders of all ages have identified the need for more daytime, evening and weekend uses and activities (such as restaurants and shopping) to complement arts facilities and cultural events. At the Citizens' Congress in September of 2003, many people also expressed the desire to have more arts and culture related venues and activities within their neighborhoods.



*Artwork abounds in Riverside, including this bronze statue in front of the Metropolitan Museum.*





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Therefore, this Arts and Culture Element contains policies and strategies to address these issues and to articulate the contributions and opportunities for the arts in Riverside. The goal is to help foster a civic environment where artistic expression and cultural diversity can flourish, where the influence of arts on the local economy is recognized, and where local government and City leaders legitimize the arts as an essential component of civic support, funding and decision-making.

*The Arts and Culture Element is guided by a commitment to the shared principle that arts and culture form the heart of a civil society and contribute to the high quality of life in Riverside by:*

- *Creating a cohesive sense of place*
- *Providing real economic benefits to the City*
- *Projecting neighborhood identity and fostering community pride*
- *Bridging language and cultural differences*
- *Enabling children to build self-esteem through artistic expression*
- *Enhancing students' creativity, critical thinking and problem solving abilities which they will use in life*
- *Attracting professionals to the community to live and work*
- *Revitalizing deteriorating neighborhoods*
- *Contributing to crime prevention*
- *Enhancing entertainment, educational, and recreational activities for residents and visitors*

- Arts Subcommittee, Riverside General Plan Update, 2003



Veterans' Monument



"Riverside Tripod"



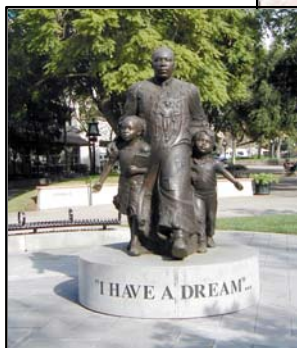
Sister City Sculpture



Civic Clock Tower



Citrus Label Mural



Martin Luther King Sculpture



Freeway Underpass Mural





## OUR RICH COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Riverside is a thriving arts community. Riverside's cultural and arts facilities and events contain diverse, rich collections and high-quality visual and performing arts that offer interest to local, regional, national and international audiences. A sampling of its assets include:

- ❖ The acclaimed watercolor collection at the Riverside Art Museum, housed in a 1929 former YWCA facility designed by Julia Morgan
- ❖ Film festivals at the historic Fox Theater, which is being restored to its former glory as a performing arts and cinema venue
- ❖ The internationally recognized Keystone-Mast photographic collection at the UCR/California Museum of Photography
- ❖ The art history collection at the Riverside Public Library
- ❖ The nationally recognized musical theater of Performance Riverside
- ❖ Diverse events and dynamic performances at the historic Municipal Auditorium
- ❖ Impressive local artist exhibits at the Riverside Community Arts Association
- ❖ The extensive array of exciting dance and ballet programs of the Riverside California Ballet
- ❖ Academically renowned visual and performing arts facilities and programs, music, drama and visual arts departments and programs at CBU, LSU, RCC and UCR
- ❖ The annual Riverside Dickens Festival, which draws residents and visitors from all over Southern California to three days of literary events, entertainment and activities
- ❖ A variety of free cultural events that celebrate the dynamic and diverse arts scene in Riverside and the Inland Empire
- ❖ Concerts throughout the year of the Raincross Chorale, presenting music ranging from classical to spirituals, folk songs, and Broadway musicals
- ❖ The longest continuously active community theater in the country, the Riverside Community Players
- ❖ The Downtown Riverside Arts Walk, and other cultural community events that celebrate the dynamic and diverse arts scene in Riverside and the Inland Empire
- ❖ The historic and natural artifacts, collections and educational outreach programs at the Riverside Metropolitan Museum
- ❖ The "living history" at the Riverside Metropolitan Museum's Heritage House, Riverside's principal resource for learning about the City's Victorian era
- ❖ The Riverside Metropolitan Museum's Harada House, a National Historic Landmark that teaches about the struggle for equal rights faced by Asian immigrants to the United States



*Riverside Art Museum*



*Fox Theater*



*Municipal Museum*



*Municipal Auditorium*



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- ❖ The nationally acclaimed, multi-cultural modern and jazz dance presented by the Bre Dance Theater company
- ❖ The authentic, traditional dances of Mexico, presented by the highly recognized *Ballet Folklórico de Riverside*
- ❖ World class architecture at the celebrated Mission Inn, a National Historic Landmark
- ❖ The historic Mission Inn's significant collection demonstrating the epic periods of development by the Inn's founder/developer and community leader, Frank Miller

These and other programs help make Riverside a well-established cultural center that is regionally recognized as a destination within the Inland Empire. As illustrated in Figure AC-1 (Arts and Culture Facilities), Riverside's established and planned arts and culture facilities are primarily concentrated at four locations across the City: on the La Sierra University (LSU) campus; on the California Baptist University (CBU) campus; Downtown Riverside, including Riverside Community College (RCC); and on the University of California at Riverside (UCR) campus.

### DOWNTOWN RIVERSIDE



UCR/California  
Museum of Photography

In 2002, the City began implementation of the Downtown Specific Plan, which recognizes arts and culture as a key ingredient in the quality of life in Downtown Riverside and a means for its revitalization. With this, the City has been actively working on formally establishing the Downtown Arts & Culture District, which encompasses Downtown's major cultural and art institutions, as well as significant architectural and historic structures. In addition, future Downtown projects will include more restaurants, shops and housing, including live/work and artist lofts, all of which complement and support a vibrant arts environment. This synergy among the arts, special events, restaurants and shops is a catalyst for the revitalization of Downtown.

While the focus of this Element is on the "arts," the importance of Downtown's physical historic setting cannot be overemphasized. The older buildings of Downtown form a historic fabric and define its physical uniqueness in relation to other cities. The combination of Riverside's setting and its arts facilities provide a climate in which arts are able to thrive. Also, Downtown's concentration of cultural and art facilities in a compact, attractive, walkable environment sets Riverside apart from many Southern California cities. This concentration of arts facilities is one of the most important aspects of Downtown's identity and a great potential for its revitalization.



MISSION INN



Figure AC-1 - Arts & Culture Facilities





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